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Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4412nd meeting

Friday, 9 November 2001, 7.35 p.m.
New York

President:	Miss Durrant	(Jamaica)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Amin
	China	Mr. Wang Donghua
	Colombia	Mr. Salazar
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Mauritius	Mr. Jingree
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Singapore	Mr. How
	Tunisia	Mr. Tekaya
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Scott

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

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01-63034 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 7.35 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Belgium, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. de Ruyt (Belgium) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2001/1058, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I invite the representative of Belgium to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. de Ruyt (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey align themselves with this statement.

I would first like to say that the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, who is at present presiding over the Council of the European Union, would have very much liked to address the Council this evening, but he was held up by meetings that he had with the European Union's associated countries, and therefore could not be present here.

I would like, at the outset, to thank the Council for having convened a meeting on a peace process that my country, along with the rest of the European Union, follows with great interest. I wish to thank in particular the Ministers of the countries signatories to the Lusaka Agreement for their presence. I consider that their presence reflects the great significance that we all attach to the peace process, just before such an important step is taken in the deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

This peace process is laborious and complex. Recent developments on the ground have been rather disappointing, and the peace process has not yet reached a point of no return. That is why this coordinating meeting between the Security Council and the Political Committee of the Lusaka Agreement is so relevant. At a time when the United Nations is preparing to enter phase III of MONUC's deployment and to mobilize additional resources, it is important that the parties to the conflict show their firm commitment to the peace process. Otherwise, it seems to me that all our efforts become meaningless. This is a long-term exercise that calls at the same time for short- and medium-term actions, but whose success will nevertheless depend mainly on the will of the parties to the peace process.

This goodwill, in our view, should take tangible form immediately in three areas: the issue of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); the withdrawal of foreign forces; and the inter-Congolese dialogue.

First, the European Union considers that all the parties to the conflict, particularly the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, should immediately halt all forms of support for armed groups. In this regard, we deplore the fact that the United Nations still does not have the information that should have been provided by the parties regarding the number, the composition and the location of armed groups on the ground. We urge the parties to provide this information, as they promised to do several months ago.

The DDR cannot be carried out randomly or piecemeal. First, MONUC must have a completely free hand in assisting the process. In this connection, I am thinking in particular of the regroupment centre in Kamina. There must also be a minimal understanding among the parties, especially between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is important that those two continue their direct bilateral dialogue to reach a real breakthrough.

I would like to remind the parties that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration must take place on a voluntary and peaceful basis. Any initiative that goes against these principles is simply unacceptable. The parties to the conflict must cooperate with the United Nations and refrain from any action that could prejudice the efforts in this matter.

Finally, it is essential that the United Nations establish the appropriate structures to conduct this exercise in a coordinated and integrated way. The latest report of the Secretary-General on MONUC goes in the right direction, as it provides for the establishment of a coordination mechanism in Kinshasa and New York between MONUC, the World Bank and all United Nations agencies concerned. It is proposed that MONUC be given responsibility for managing this coordination.

Secondly, disengagement is the first significant step in the process of the withdrawal of foreign forces. That first step must lead to a second step and then to further progress. On the one hand, Kisangani must be demilitarized. We call on Rwanda to use all its influence with the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma) to achieve this. On the other hand, progressive deployment must be accompanied by a gradual and reciprocal withdrawal of troops. We have noted with satisfaction the withdrawal of Namibian troops and of a good proportion of the Ugandan troops. I recall that Namibia is the first signatory of the Lusaka Agreement to have withdrawn its forces in accordance with the provisions of that instrument. We sincerely hope that its example will be followed by the other States concerned. In that connection, we encourage Uganda to complete the process of withdrawal it has started, and we urge the Rwandan Government and the other Governments concerned to expedite preparations for withdrawing their troops in accordance with resolution 1304 (2000).

Finally, the inter-Congolese dialogue is another essential building block of the peace process. We do not wish to hold forth here about the poor result of the Addis Ababa meeting, which we regret, but wish rather to urge the parties to the dialogue and the facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire, to agree as quickly as possible to hold further meetings to revive the process in order to engage in substantive dialogue on the parameters of an inclusive and democratic transition, with a realistic timetable. We remain convinced that, with good will and a spirit of compromise, the process can be put back on track. I reaffirm the support of the European Union and its member States in that connection.

The suffering of the Congolese population, the grave violations of human rights committed against it and its appalling humanitarian situation all require us to shoulder our responsibilities. We support the Secretary-General's recommendation to the Council that the third phase of MONUC deployment be started in order to sustain the momentum of the peace process, despite the risks and costs involved, in the hope that the parties to the conflict, both in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and elsewhere the region, will fully assume their moral and political responsibilities.

In other words, the Union urges the signatory States and the other parties to the Lusaka Agreement to show the political will required for the continuation of the peace process. The European Union will support the process, and it undertakes to use all its energy and influence to that end in close cooperation with the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and all the parties concerned. At the end of this month, the President in office of the European Union, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, Mr. Louis Michel, will go to the region with the High Representative of the European Union, Mr. Javier Solana, and the External Relations Commissioner, Mr. Chris Patten. That visit will reaffirm the strong commitment of the European Union to the peace process and its solidarity with the region's long-suffering people.

The President: It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution (S/2001/1058) before it. If I hear no objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bangladesh, China, Colombia, France, Ireland, Jamaica, Mali, Mauritius, Norway, Russian Federation, Singapore, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1376 (2001).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 7.45 p.m.